

Gases/Glues/Nitrates-: Basics

Other names: *Laughing Gas, Nitrous and Nos*

- Solvents (glues), gases (usually butane lighter fuel, or aerosol products), and nitrous oxide have a depressant affect on the brain
- They are sniffed or breathed into the lungs
- They slow down the central nervous system causing giddiness and loss of coordination.



The effects:

- Users feel thick headed, dizzy & dreamy.
- They may also hallucinate and feel giggly
- The effects of a single lung-full of glue or gas start within a few seconds and last for up to 5minutes
- The effects disappear after 15 to 45 minutes.
- A balloon of nitrous may last around 30 seconds

- Need more advice

www.drugscope.co.uk

www.talktofrank.com

- Legal status

Please refer to [http: www.release.org.uk](http://www.release.org.uk) where information is kept up-to-date

Risks

- Squirting the stuff down the throat may cause the body to produce a fluid which floods the lungs. This can be fatal
- Abusing gasses, glues or aerosols can cause nausea, vomiting, black-outs & fatal heart problems
- Accidents can happen when the user is high because their senses are affected
- There is a risk of suffocation if the substance is inhaled from a plastic bag over the head
- Long term abuse can damage the brain, liver & kidney
- The after-effects, e.g. headache, may last for up to half-an-hour
- Large doses can cause drowsiness, numbness, and possibly unconsciousness and sedation (half-asleep)
- Use of gasses, glues or aerosols can cause instant death - even on the first go

Gases/Glues/Nitrates: More Information

More risks

- Suffocation and brain damage can be caused by failing to take breaths of air between inhalations of the chemicals
- Falling unconscious with the bag or balloon of nitrous or other volatile substance stuck over the mouth or head can also lead to suffocation especially if the user is alone
- Inhaling the fumes of a volatile substance can and does cause sudden death in a number of other ways too:
 - Renal failure (liver and kidneys stop working)
 - Heart and respiratory (lungs) failure
 - Inhaling lighter gas, or aerosol gas directly into the mouth can cause the throat the freeze
 - Lighter fuel and aerosol gas can cause the heart to beat irregularly (cardiac arrhythmia) increasing the risk of heart failure



Addiction

- Like most psychoactive (mind-altering) substances people become tolerant to the effects so if they continue to use regularly they will find they need more to get the same effect
- In some users this leads to what is known as a psychological dependence (users feel they need the substance to help them feel 'normal')
- Volatile substances can also cause a relatively mild physical dependence marked by withdrawal symptoms such as difficulty sleeping, feeling sick, agitation, irritability, sweating, and shaking

■ Basics

■ More

■ Harm Minimisation

Harm Minimisation

Always take breaths of air between inhalations to avoid oxygen deprivation

Do not open a tank of nitrous in a small space (again, this will help prevent oxygen deprivation)

Plastic bags, and balloons can suffocate the user if they fall unconscious and the bag sticks to their nose and mouth

Compressed gas that is put directly into the mouth may burst blood vessels in the lungs, which may cause the lungs to collapse

Cold gas—from aerosols—that is put directly into the mouth may freeze the throat or lips risking asphyxiation

Some people can feel very nauseous, and may vomit after using—avoid using too much